

**Camping with Approved Special Recreation Permits
Environmental Assessment OR-030-99-029
September 1999**

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

The purpose is to provide for authorized camping and associated support activities for commercial and noncommercial outfitting/guiding types of services and activities on public lands not currently collectively addressed by other existing plans (e.g. Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River Management Plan, Leslie Gulch Area of Critical Environmental Concern Management Plan) within the Malheur Resource Area as an element of authorized Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) while providing for public safety and adequate protection of resources. During this fiscal year there have been several SRP applications with proposed camping activities, which represents a notable increase from past years. This assessment evaluates actions and collectively provides mitigation stipulations for such activities/services which would be applied as appropriate to those issued SRPs that include camping and associated support activities on public lands in the resource area.

B. CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLANS AND REGULATIONS

The proposed action is in conformance with the existing Management Framework Plans covering the Malheur Resource Area, with existing federal regulation in 43 CFR, Subpart 8372, Special Recreation Permits Other Than on Developed Recreation Sites, and is in concurrence with the current Final Special Recreation Permit Policy published in the Federal Register, Vol. 49, No 29, February 10, 1984. Often this EA directs the reader to the Draft Southeast Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP; BLM, October, 1998), since that document provides complete and sufficient description of various elements of the existing environment which affects the proposed action and alternative.

II. PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE

A. PROPOSED ACTION

Provide for overnight camping and associated support activities for commercial and noncommercial outfitting/guiding types of services/activities on federal lands for dispersed recreation activities such as hunting, fishing, sightseeing, wildlife observation, backpacking, collecting and horseback riding and/or packing. One or several of these activities may occur with an authorized group during any given outing. Seldom would such use involve more than 16 persons per outing. On a case-by-case basis, camping and associated support activities would be restricted or precluded by permit mitigation stipulations in order to meet management objectives of special management areas or in locations of specific resource concern (such as

special status species and their habitats, crucial seasonal wildlife use locations, sensitive ecological niches [riparian and water sources]), and for the protection of important cultural and paleontological resource values. Attachment A, as an element of this proposed action, provides for mitigation stipulations which selectively would be applied as appropriate for a given issued SRP, based on information submitted with an application for permit, including the applicant's required plan of operation. Activities conducted would be monitored, with any determined adjustments made by employing the appropriate mitigation stipulation(s) to insure the protection of and prevent undue and unnecessary degradation of public land values. Motorized vehicles are commonly utilized for logistical support of camping activities, and this assessment considers the impacts associated with such use. Off-road vehicle use beyond that described herein will be considered under separate environmental assessment relating specifically to that type of activity.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative, each applicant proposing camping and associated support activities would be assessed by a separate EA document specific only to the activities proposed by that applicant. This is the process presently employed for a SRP applicant who proposes overnight camping and associated support activities on public lands.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

A. NON-LIVING COMPONENTS

The resource area lies within the northern reaches of the Great Basin Desert. The area basically includes public lands in the northern half of Malheur County, Oregon. Average precipitation is less than 10 inches annually in the lower elevations, received as snow and cold rains in the winter and seasonal thunderstorms in the spring through summer months. Topography varies from flat to rolling low lands to canyon-cut mountains and plateau country by numerous shallow to deep drainages with perennial, intermittent and/or ephemeral drainage channels which may be affected with seasonal surface water runoff. Temperatures vary widely, with snow commonly accompanying cold winters at most elevations and summers typified by temperatures exceeding 100 degrees F. for several days. Much of the over 2 million acres of BLM-administered public land is remote and fairly primitive in character with only three major highways dissecting the area. Further information of non-living components, including climate, soils, air quality and water resources, is described in BLM's draft SEORMP.

B. LIVING COMPONENTS

Vegetation – Vegetation composition varies, affected by elevation, soil types and water availability. Most of the landscape is typified by native components of sagebrush ecosystems including big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), low sagebrush (*Artemisia arbuscula*), bluebunch wheatgrass (*Agropyron spicatum*), bottlebrush squirreltail (*Sitanion hystrix*), and Sandberg bluegrass (*Poa sandbergii*). Locations of invasive

annual species such as cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*) and various weed species are interspersed within the area. The present ecological condition of vegetation ranges from a low seral stage with downward trend to a high seral stage with an upward trend, depending on location, the levels, types and history of human induced uses of specific locations, and natural causes of ecological change. The natural vegetative landscape is dissected by patterns of treated and seeded monocultural perennial grasses to support rangeland livestock use. Scattered forest locations of ponderosa pine and Douglas fir mixed with juniper stands are predominately limited to the northwest sector of Malheur RA. Juniper stands are located in scattered locations throughout the two RAs, primarily in upper elevations. Riparian zones and associated woody vegetation are scattered throughout the area, primarily associated with springs, perennial and intermittent canyon drainages, snow pockets, and at some livestock reservoirs. The draft SEORMP further describes vegetation and lists known botanical species within the area.

Wildlife/Fisheries-- The more common game species include mule deer, elk, antelope, bighorn sheep, bear, sage grouse, chukar and other partridge species, doves and various waterfowl. Birds are especially abundant with locations of high species diversity. Swainson's, ferruginous, and red-tailed hawks, as well as kestrels and northern harriers, are common. Peregrine falcons, prairie falcons and sharp-shinned hawks have also been observed. Golden eagles are common year-long while small numbers of bald eagles, attracted by abundant waterfowl, winter in the Malheur and Owyhee canyons. For certain locations, the quality of habitat and the diversity and abundance of wildlife makes components of this resource outstandingly remarkable and provide wilderness characteristics.

Some flowing waterways and smaller reservoirs are seasonally stocked with hatchery trout species, other reservoirs and waterways provide habitat for various warm water game fish species, including large and small mouth bass, catfish and crappie.

Nongame species are numerous both on land and in water, including small birds, mammals, fish and amphibians. The draft SEORMP further discusses and lists known wildlife, fish and amphibians species within the area.

Livestock -- Livestock grazing, predominately cattle, remains an important use within the area. The Vale Rangeland Project during the 1960s significantly enhanced the livestock industry with the extensive placement of livestock reservoirs, spring and water pipeline/trough developments, large seedings of perennial nonnative grass species and increased pasture fencing. The cattle and domestic sheep ranching enterprises collectively remain a significant economic factor to the general area, as they have since the late 19th century. Refer to the draft SEORMP for additional information about domestic livestock use in the area.

C. HUMAN USES AND VALUES

The area is sparsely populated with the exception of Ontario (about 12,000 pop.), and smaller southeastern Oregon rural communities such as Vale, Nyssa, Ironside, and Juntura. Within a 100 mile radius are the many larger communities of southwestern Idaho, including Caldwell, Nampa, Meridian, Boise, and its smaller communities such as Fruitland, Payette, Weiser, Emmett and Eagle.

Recreation-- Outdoor recreation activities occurs throughout the year on public lands. Much of the recreation activities originates from locations listed above. Increasing visitation originates from central and western Oregon. Both maintained and primitive (non-maintained) vehicular dirt roads are distributed throughout much of the area. Historically, few commercial hunting and fishing guiding/outfitting operations have expressed interest in conducting operations within the area. However, requests for such operations have been increasing, particularly during the past year. In 1998 three commercial hunting outfitters operated under permit in the area. During 1999, the number of inquiries for such use doubled. Hunting outfitting/guiding occurs primarily from October through December while other guiding activities occur spring through early fall. At this point in time there is adequate opportunity for an increase of such activities without unduly affecting the quality of hunting, fishing and other outdoor recreation experiences throughout the area. Other recreation uses by the general visiting public in the area include dispersed camping, hiking, boating on the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River, general sightseeing/vehicle touring, hunting and fishing, and enjoyment of developed campgrounds and interpretive wayside exhibits in the area. The area also contains outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation, particularly within the 15 wilderness study areas (WSAs) which encompass over 274,000 acres.

Visual Resources-- The visual resource values within the resource area are diverse. A full description of the visual resource management classes and amount of land within each classification is described in the draft SEORMP.

D. THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Refer to the draft SEORMP for a description of threatened and endangered species and other special status species found within the area.

E. CULTURAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Refer to the draft SEORMP for a description of significant cultural and paleontological resources within the area. The BLM maintains an ongoing inventory and management of these resources located on public lands.

F. NATIVE AMERICAN CONCERNS

The Owyhee River, tributary canyons and adjacent uplands are known to have been intensively and extensively utilized by Native Americans. Traditionally used resources include edible roots such as biscuit root, camas and onion, goosefoot, Indian ricegrass, and Great Basin wild rye seeds; willow, quaking aspen posts for hide working; basketry grasses, chokecherries, currants; mountain mahogany; and obsidian, basalt and cryptocrystalline silicate toolstone sources.

G. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS

Refer to the draft SEORMP and its supporting references for detailed descriptions of special management areas' (SMA) values, locations and management objectives and prescriptions, including the Final Oregon Wilderness EIS (December, 1989) and activity management plans for the Oregon National Historic Trail, the Owyhee National Wild and Scenic River (NWSR), various existing Areas of Critical Environmental Concern /Research Natural Areas (ACEC/RNA), and wildlife habitat management areas. The draft SEORMP also adequately describes proposed new SMAs within the area, their resource values and proposed management prescriptions.

H. OTHER

The following critical elements of the human environment are either not affected by the proposal and alternative or are not present:

1. Prime or Unique Farmlands - Not present
2. Floodplains - Not affected
3. Air Quality - Not affected
4. Environmental Justice - Not affected
5. Native American Religious Concerns - Not affected

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

A. PROPOSED ACTION -

1. NON-LIVING COMPONENTS

An insignificant impact would result from smoke of a campfire and dust created by vehicle use associated with camping. Stipulations in a permit providing restrictions of livestock use and distances of off road vehicular travel would minimize soil compaction/trampling impacts of these activities. The 14 day maximum camping stay would also help protect soils by limiting the duration of soil compaction at a given campsite. Stipulations in a permit providing restrictions of certain activities where water is present would enhance protection of water resources and water quality, thus, not cause any significant adverse impact on water resources. Impacts caused by a permittee's camping activities would likely result in less adverse impacts to resource values than caused by other general (non-permitted) camping visitors who are less regulated when conducting their dispersed camping activities on public lands.

2. LIVING COMPONENTS

Vegetation – Grasses and other small annual and perennial plants would be subject to localized trampling during camping activities. Site specifically, some individual smaller woody plants, such as sagebrush, would also be subject to damage or removal to accommodate space for camping equipment such as tents or a clearing for a campfire pit. Restrictions on the cutting and burning of woody vegetation, the maximum duration of stay, the extent of allowable recreational livestock trampling and duration of their stay at any one specific location, and requirement of providing livestock feed would provide substantial protection from camping activities within and adjacent to a camping area. Grasses and other herbaceous species would be able to partially recover on an annual basis. Over the long term, frequent or repeated camping stays at a given site would result in a localized “hardening” of the site, evidenced by less to no vegetation at locations of concentrated use within a camp site. Stipulation of no camping use or limitation of site-specific camping activities where camping activities have notably impacted a camp site setting would enhance opportunities for vegetative recovery over a shorter period of time.

Wildlife/Fisheries – Should camping occur close to certain surface water sources, temporary, short term impacts to accessibility to the water by some wildlife would occur. This impact would be substantially lessened by restricting the camping within 300-600 feet of such watering sites. Precluding or restricting camping activities where seasonal or specific resource needs of more sensitive wildlife species or populations are required would lessen impacts to those animals. Not allowing activities which would destroy, severely damage or alter the quality of flowing water or of drainage channels/banks and their associated vegetation would protect important fishery habitats. Sanitation stipulations would also help prevent adverse impacts on wildlife and fishery resources.

Livestock – Precluding camping from within 300-600 feet of key livestock watering sites would avoid substantial disruption of livestock present in the area. Stipulating no chasing or harassment of domestic livestock would lessen impacts to livestock. Overall, impacts to livestock would be nominal and insignificant.

3. HUMAN USES AND VALUES

Recreation – There could be an occasional conflict between a permittee and another camping party of the general recreating public regarding use of a specific camping location. Such incidents would be isolated and infrequent. A standard condition of an issued SRP is that possession of a permit does not give the permittee any pre-emptory rights of use or access on public lands. Camping stipulations of an issued SRP would, overall, enhance the quality of a camping experience for the camping party while

providing public safety and protection of public land resources, and would provide for a clean, nominally adversely impacted camp site for future campers to occupy.

Visual Resources – Permit requirements which protect resources such as soils, water, vegetation, wildlife, fisheries and cultural/archeological resources would enhance protection of the esthetic values associated with these resources and their setting. Site specifically, the ability to limit camping activities within known visually highly sensitive settings, which otherwise could be subject to significant deterioration by uncontrolled camping activities, would enhance protection of important visual values.

4. THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES

Stipulation of no camping use or limitation of certain camping activities and/or how camping activities would be conducted site specifically would provide protection for listed threatened or endangered species and/or for other special status species. Collectively, appropriate mitigation stipulations from Attachment A applied to a given permit would result in no or insignificant impacts to these species.

5. CULTURAL/PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Stipulations for issued SRPs, regardless of approved activity, provide protective measures of both known and hidden historic and archeological resources on public land. The additional provision of specifying no camping activities from within 300 feet of known historic, archeological and paleontological sites would further assist protection of these resource values.

6. SPECIAL MANAGEMENT AREAS

Stipulation of no camping use or limitation of certain camping activities and/or how camping activities would be conducted site specifically would provide protection for important resources associated with SMAs and for other sensitive resource values. Wilderness values within WSAs would not be impaired, and surface disturbing impacts within WSAs would be temporary in nature and scope. Outstandingly remarkable values of both designated and eligible national Wild and Scenic Rivers, as well as important and relevant values of designated and potential ACEC/RNAs, would be adequately protected from possible adverse impacts of camping activities. Collectively, appropriate mitigation stipulations from Attachment A applied to a given permit would result in no or minimal impacts to SMA and other sensitive resource values.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

For a given issued SRP, resultant impacts of camping and associated support activities would be similar to those described under the Proposed Action. A mandatory environmental assessment would be required for each separate SRP application, and specific special

mitigative stipulations would be developed, tailored to the applicant's proposal and to resource protection and public safety needs. This is unlike the proposed action, where assessment of possible impacts and the development of viable mitigative stipulations for camping activities is accomplished and useful for all future applications received by the BLM.

While resultant mitigated environmental impacts would be similar to the Proposed Action, the procedures required to reach that conclusion would be needlessly repetitive for each application processed and an inefficient use of application processing time required by BLM. This would result in less timely or delayed processing of a number of applications and unnecessary inconvenience for permit applicants.

V. MITIGATION MEASURES

Possible reasonable mitigative measures are described and employed in the Proposed Action, as displayed in Attachment A. Specific mitigation stipulations would be applied to a given issued permit based on needs of public safety and protection of resources on public land.

VI. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

A. PROPOSED ACTION

Potential adverse environmental impacts of camping and associated support activities would be adequately mitigated over the short and long term of processing, administering and monitoring uses authorized by issued SRPs. Over time, increased SRP authorizations would result in increased camping activities and associated resource impacts. As more SRPs are issued, it is likely additional new camping locations would evolve. At some point in time, determined by long-term monitoring of authorized camping activities, the accumulation of new camping sites may require further assessment. This increase in locations would have minimal impact relative to the existing and any future combined dispersed camping activities conducted by the general camping public, which does not require issuance of a SRP for such activities.

B. NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Residual impacts would be the same as described under the proposed action.

VII. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHORT-TERM USE TO LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY

Over the authorized use period of a given permit, impacts to resource values caused by camping and associated support activities would be insignificant. Over the long term (20 years), all permitted camping activities and associated support activities would cause a nominal adverse impact on the opportunity to continue to provide adequate desirable camping activities on public land.

VIII. COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

Very localized impacts to vegetation and soils as a result of frequent repetitive or extended use at a given camp site and any long term use of a developed two track motorized vehicle route to a camp site would result in the losses of increasing amounts of vegetation and compaction of soils in locations of concentrated use. The location of ground camp fires would severely damage soil nutrients otherwise available for vegetation growth.

IX. PARTICIPATING STAFF

The following persons have participated in the development of this EA as either an author or reviewer:

Bob Alward - Outdoor Recreation Planner
Cythia Tait - Fishery Biologist
Al Bammann - Wildlife Biologist
Shaney Rockefeller - Soil Scientist
Jean Findley - Botanist
Steve Christensen - Range Management Specialist
Randy Eyre - Range Management Specialist
Kahne Jensen - Range Management Specialist
Ron Rembowski - Range Management Specialist
Diane Pritchard - Archeologist
Jon Freeman - Realty Specialist
Bill Holsheimer - Geologist
Tom Dabbs - Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist

Attachment A
Listing of Reasonable Mitigation Stipulations for SRPs
Authorizing Camping and Associated Support Activities on Public Lands

A combination of any of the following mitigation stipulations for camping and associated support activities may be applied to a specific issued SRP, based on an applicant's submitted plan of operations and requirements for resource protection and management, providing for public health and safety, and to assist resolving user conflicts:

Camping associated use stipulations within the administrative boundary of the Main, West Little and North Fork Owyhee Wild & Scenic Rivers (WSR), as approved by the rivers' management plan, are applicable to an approved SRP. The stipulations associated with camping include those listed below. Other camping stipulations of this attachment identified within an approved SRP would apply in the WSRs' corridors, and where more restrictive, the WSR stipulations would supercede other similar camping associated stipulations of an issued permit.

1. Maximum party size upriver of Rome, Oregon is 15 persons, and 20 persons down river of Rome.
2. Carry out system must be used to remove solid human waste and paper products from the river corridors and disposed of properly.
3. Wood and charcoal fires will be permitted only under the following conditions: use of fire pans is mandatory (Malheur County Ordinance 26-3/23/83, and Federal Regulation). Rock rings will not be constructed or used. Contents of fire pan, charcoal burned wood, etc. will be removed and carried out of the canyon and disposed of properly. Only drift wood will be used for fuel; do not cut or destroy standing vegetation – alive or dead. Scatter any unused firewood before leaving camp.
4. Aircraft landing without authorization is prohibited.
5. Leakproof portable toilet systems shall be employed to remove solid human waste (feces) and toilet paper from public lands. Toilet system contents shall be disposed of directly into an authorized dump facility (RV camp, sewer line, sewage plant or unit designed specifically to receive such waste).
6. Operation of any motor-driven water craft is prohibited.
7. Kitchen waste water shall be strained to remove food particles. Particles shall be removed from the canyon with all other garbage and refuse. Strained kitchen and personal hygiene water shall

be dumped in porous ground above high water and away from regularly used camping areas. Do not use soap in or near side streams/channels or springs.

8. Camping is allowed within 200 feet of the Owyhee River so long as riparian vegetation is not severely damaged.

On a case-by-case basis, based on an applicant's plan of operation, additional permit stipulations may be included in order to meet management objectives of special management areas (SMAs) such as but not limited to wilderness study areas (WSAs), Areas of Critical Environmental Concern/Research Natural Areas, the Oregon National Historic Trail, and of other sensitive resource values. As approved in the Leslie Gulch ACEC Management Plan, camping within the ACEC is limited to the Slocum Creek Campground.

Unless otherwise stipulated by BLM, camp sites and associated activities which are supported by motorized vehicles shall not be established beyond 300 feet off a road. In areas designated closed to vehicular use or restricted to designated vehicular routes (including but not limited to WSAs, ACEC/RNAs and Wild and Scenic Rivers), off-road motorized vehicle use is not permitted.

Unless otherwise stipulated, all camp sites must be located at least 100 feet from streams and lakes, 300 feet from springs and known historic, archeological and paleontological sites, and 600 feet from livestock troughs, earthen reservoirs and wildlife guzzlers where there is no other water source available for animal consumption within one mile of those types of water sources. If determined necessary by BLM, BLM can notify livestock allotment permittees of authorized camping activities.

Historic, archeological or vertebrate paleontological materials shall not be disturbed or collected.

All temporary facilities (such as corrals, shelters and storage caches) must be described in the permit application and are subject to approval by BLM. Unless otherwise authorized, all structures shall be fully dismantled and removed if a camp will be vacated for more than two consecutive nights. No year-round, permanent camps or support facilities may be established on BLM-administered public lands.

Unless otherwise stipulated or preauthorized by BLM, the maximum period of use/stay at a single camping site is 13 nights/14 days per 12 month period. A stay less than this period of time may be stipulated by BLM to meet resource management or human safety needs.

The permittee shall maintain all camp location premises to standards of repair, orderliness, neatness, and sanitation acceptable to BLM's authorized officer. Camp areas will be regularly cleaned and no trash or litter will be allowed to accumulate.

When camps or other facilities are dismantled, the area shall be left in a natural state; surface evidence of ground campfire rings/structures and burned materials shall be completely eliminated.

The permittee shall be responsible for providing proper human sanitation facilities. The permittee shall provide pit type or portable toilets at all camps. Earthen toilet pits must be deep enough to place a required minimum of one foot of soil into the pit when finished with the pit or vacating camp, whichever occurs first. BLM has the discretion of conducting an on-site determination of the minimum method of disposal prior to actual use.

No waste or by-products or substances shall be discharged on public lands or waters if they contain any properties in concentrations that would result in harm to soils, vegetation, fish, wildlife and/or humans, or to water sources such as streams, springs, reservoirs, guzzlers, or subsurface water.

All non-burnable refuse (metals, glass, foil etc.) and refuse not burned shall be packed out for proper disposal. All waste from harvested game or other animals must be disposed of in a sanitary manner away from a campsite and out of view of where human use occurs.

The permittee shall be required to pack out all refuse and organic garbage (burnable and non-burnable) for proper disposal.

Campfires shall not be left unattended. The permittee shall be responsible for the control of any fire which he/she or his/her employees, agents or clients starts and will be liable for any damages and fire suppression costs resulting from such fire(s) causing a wildfire. The permittee shall ensure all persons affiliated with his party adhere to any fire use restrictions in effect on public land and report to BLM any observed wildfires. At a minimum, a permittee shall keep at least one shovel at a campsite as a fire control and suppression tool.

Dead downed wood may be used for authorized camping activities. Removal of live or dead wood from standing vegetation is not permitted.

The cutting or gathering of woody vegetation (live or dead) or of human-made structures for fire fuel is prohibited. Only gas-generated stoves and/or other types of warming devices, such as encased candles, may be used during authorized permit activities.

Authorized use of livestock for transportation is temporary and will not establish a priority for future use. Because domestic livestock kept in close quarters for extended periods of time can cause severe damage to vegetation, livestock shall not be tied up for extended periods to woody vegetation. Picket lines or other livestock restraints or containment methods will be employed in a manner so to prevent substantial damage to woody vegetation. Animals must not be tied, corralled, or picketed within 200 feet of any lake, stream, or developed campground or other developed facility.

Forage/feed for livestock must be provided by the permittee and be certified weed free. If determined necessary by BLM, livestock feed may be limited solely to food pellets. Upon vacating a campsite, excess forage/feed must be removed from public land for proper disposal.

In order to prevent the introduction of noxious weeds and to minimize visual impacts, vegetative bedding or other vegetative ground cover materials shall not be imported for use by domestic livestock or by humans or for other activities.

All domestic animals will be kept under control in route to and at a camp site to protect wildlife, livestock, vegetation, and other public land users. The chasing or harassment by dogs or people of domestic livestock or of an individual animal not being legally hunted is not a permitted activity.

Wanton destruction or damage to plants, animals or other natural features is prohibited.

The applicant assumes all risks associated with any consumption of water located on public lands. No camping or associated support facilities or concentrated activities shall occur in a manner which will destroy, severely damage or alter the quality of flowing water or of drainage channels/banks and their associated vegetation.

BLM reserves the right to close various sites and/or areas of the public land, and/or to restrict camping activities site-specifically, to prevent resource damage and use conflicts, to protect special status species and/or habitat (including Threaten or Endangered species), and to promote visitor safety.

The permittee is responsible for being informed of and complying with off-road vehicle (OHV) use designations and restrictions that exist within the area of operation. Permit issuance does not waive any OHV use restrictions, whether local, State or Federal. Restricted use of mechanical vehicles, (such as bicycles and game carts) can be stipulated to protect resources, minimize use conflicts and provide for public safety. OHV designation information is available at the Vale District office.

The use of aircraft must be preauthorized by BLM. Aircraft use can be denied at the discretion of the BLM authorizing officer. A detailed description of proposed purpose/need, frequency, degree and calendar period(s) of use, specific use locations, type(s) of aircraft and any other pertinent information regarding aircraft use must be included in an applicant's plan of operation. Aircraft use will not be authorized in or near locations where outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation are documented by BLM (such as in Wilderness Study Areas) and which could be adversely impacted by proximate aircraft use.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the information contained in this Environmental Assessment (OR030-99-0029) and all other information available, it is my determination that none of the alternatives constitutes a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

S/Roy Masinton

Authorized Officer
Field Manager, Malheur Resource Area

October 12, 1999

Date

DECISION RECORD

It is my decision to implement the proposed action as described in EA OR-030-99-029, including those mitigation measures as described in Attachment A of that EA (copy attached herein).

Rationale

No public comments were received on the proposed action. The action will provide for appropriate protection of natural and cultural resource protection, public health and safety; enhance the quality of camping experiences on public lands associated with permitted commercial operations; and help avoid user conflicts.

Authorized Official: S/Roy Masinton
Field Manager, Malheur Resource Area

Date: October 12, 1999